

Common sense dictates that our country must have a single, national immigration system. If Puerto Rico, or Hawaii, or Oregon, or Washington could write their own immigration laws—and grant work visas to foreigners—the U.S. immigration system would be in chaos. That is exactly what is happening in the CNMI.

Over the past 20 years, the number of citizens in the Commonwealth doubled. During the same period, however, the population of alien workers exploded by 2,000 percent. Today, the CNMI has twice as many indentured laborers as citizens in its work force.

A decade ago, in response to a growing concern about the large number of guest workers employed in the CNMI, the Reagan administration demanded change. Since then, the Bush and Clinton administrations have repeatedly criticized CNMI immigration and demanded reform.

The Commonwealth is simply unable to control its borders. One CNMI official testified that they have “no effective control” over immigration.

The INS reports that the CNMI has no reliable records of aliens entering the Commonwealth, how long they remain, and when, if ever, they depart.

A bipartisan commission labeled the Commonwealth’s immigration system “antithetical to American values.”

It is not just the number of workers that prompt concern; alien workers in the CNMI serve as indentured laborers. In a civilized society, indentured servitude, we believe, is immoral. The United States outlawed indenture over a century ago, but it continues today in the CNMI. The Commonwealth is becoming an international embarrassment for the United States. We have received complaints from the Philippines, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh about immigration abuses and mistreatment of workers. Countries around the world watch—and wait—for Congress to act.

The CNMI system of indentured migrant labor violates basic democratic principles. It is time for Congress to enact CNMI immigration reform.

Mr. President, I yield back the remainder of my time and yield the floor.

EXHIBIT No. 1

THREE PLEAD GUILTY TO FORCING WOMEN INTO SLAVERY AND PROSTITUTION IN NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Three individuals who were indicted last November on charges that they lured women from China, held them in slavery and forced them into prostitution pled guilty today in federal district court in Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, the Justice Department announced.

Soon Oh Kwon, president of Kwon Enterprises, Inc., which does business in Saipan, pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to violate rights, specifically the right to be free from involuntary servitude. Kwon’s wife, Ying Yu Meng pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to violate federal laws that prohibit involuntary servitude, extortion, and transportation for illegal sexual activity. Kwon’s son, Mo Young Kwon, who is an officer of Kwon Enterprises, also entered a

guilty plea to one count of transportation for illegal sexual activity.

“Sadly, we have seen too many cases of modern day slavery,” said Bill Lann Lee, Acting Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. “Today’s guilty pleas, should put those who exploit workers on notice that the Justice Department will be relentless in bringing them to justice.”

The charges arose out of allegations that the three lured women from China to the CNMI and then held them in slavery and forced them to work as prostitutes in K’s Hideaway Karaoke, a bar owned by Kwon Enterprises. “This kind of abuse of guest workers is intolerable” said Frederick A. Black, U.S. Attorney for the District of the Northern Mariana Islands. “No matter where someone is from, once they come to the United States, they should be free from slavery.” As part of his guilty plea filed with the court, Soon Oh Kwon admitted that, in 1996 and 1997, Kwon Enterprises, in collaboration with Kwon’s mother-in-law, recruited and brought women from China to Saipan to work at the karaoke club, where they were forced to have sex with customers. The women were not allowed to stop working for Kwon Enterprises until they had paid debts owed to Kwon and his family for bringing them to Saipan. In order to discourage the women from leaving without permission, the women were subjected to mental and physical coercion, which included threats to their lives, and their families’ reputations in China. Soon Oh Kwon also admitted to brandishing a pistol at some of the women. Kwon and his wife also admitted that they threatened the women in order to prevent them from making complaints to the CNMI Department of Labor and Immigration.

Kwon’s wife admitted that she had general oversight responsibility for the women who were employed by Kwon Enterprises and made sure that they did not leave without permission by intimidating and instilling fear in them. Kwon’s son admitted that he made arrangements with customers of the karaoke club to have sex with the women, collected the money, and directed the women to leave with the customers in order to engage in illegal sexual activity.

Sentencing is set before Judge Alex R. Munson on January 11, 2000. Soon Oh Kwon is facing a maximum prison term of ten years; Ying Yu Meng, a maximum prison term of five years; and Mo Young Kwon, a maximum prison term of ten years.

The prosecution was the result of a cooperative investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation as part of the Clinton Administration’s CNMI Initiative on Labor, Immigration and Law Enforcement, a broad based multi-agency initiative designed to increase resources and oversight in the CNMI, a U.S. Commonwealth located in Micronesia.

RECOGNITION OF THE “WAKE UP. GET REAL.” PROGRAM

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, earlier this week, I had the pleasure of visiting twice with students, educators, and parents from the Edmonds School District. During that visit, I heard more about a community effort that demonstrates the value of local ideas and local innovation. The program is titled, Wake Up. Get Real. and is the product of Edmonds-Woodway High School students who are taking leadership roles in eliminating substance abuse and violence in their schools.

Some of those students are here this week in Washington, DC, and were able

to join me on one of my regular radio shows where they shared their creative work with members of the media from across Washington State. While they are in town, I would like to take this opportunity to present them with one of my “Innovation in Education” Awards.

Wake Up. Get Real.’s strength lies in the grassroots, community-oriented nature of its effort, led by students, to reduce the violence and substance use that can tarnish a school’s learning environment. The program is young, as it was only created this past spring, at the behest of students concerned about the perception of unsafe schools and an increasingly negative public perception of teens.

Rather than accept such a situation, the students embarked on a crusade that upholds respect, dignity, and integrity while teaching their peers that there are a vast number of students who choose not to participate in substance abuse or in violent activity. Additionally, the students are teaching educators about what is causing problems in their school and helping them to eliminate alcohol and drug use and violence in their classrooms.

All told, Wake Up. Get Real. generates increased community awareness; provides intervention and prevention from dangerous behavior at all grade levels (K-12); promotes increased educator focus on health as a factor in student learning; provides education materials for adults and students; and offers efficient access to referral resources.

For a program with such young roots, one would expect that it would still be in its infant stages. Rather, Wake Up. Get Real. already touts widespread community support from the school district, local health care providers, area law enforcement, and even the Drug Enforcement Administration. Community support has been so strong that public service announcements are currently being run on various cable channels to heighten local awareness of this important campaign.

When I began my Innovation in Education award program, my goal was to highlight the importance of local control in education. I couldn’t ask for a better example than the students who lead Wake Up. Get Real. They have rallied the support of the community behind them and I commend them for their work in changing their schools for the better.

JACOB WETTERLING FOUNDATION

Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I rise today in to recognize 10th anniversary of the disappearance of one of Minnesota’s finest young men, Jacob Wetterling.

Jacob’s abduction at gun point 10 years ago today from St. Joseph, Minnesota, has profoundly affected the lives of his family, but also the lives of the people of Minnesota and the entire United States. Jacob’s family has endured a significant loss and has found